

## **I Am Not a Matador! / Encounter with a Bull**

As I left Sunny Hillside School on that sunny afternoon, I had only two things on my mind: milk and cookies.

My mom had baked peanut butter cookies for the Methodist Church Bake Sale. I knew she would let me taste one before she took them to the bake sale. And we always had bottles of fresh milk in the icebox from the morning's milking.

Sometimes I walked home from school with my friend Sondra—cutting through the cornfield and Brown's farmyard. Other days, I joined Jackie on the long dirt road. That was the long way home. But this day, I walked across the neighbor's pasture—straight home, with cookies on my mind.

Following a day at Sunny Hillside School, filled with reading, spelling, arithmetic, I told my school friend's good-bye, and I walked down the hill. I crossed the dirt road to a cornfield and climbed over the fence into the neighbor's pasture.

The neighbor's bull was roaming in the pasture, munching on the green grass.

I do not remember *why*, but I twirled around and taunted the neighbor's bull. Bulls are not enraged by seeing red; movement is what sets the beasts off. And I was moving—jumping up and down and raising my arms.

From a distance, the bull glared at me. A sudden chill went through my body, and I watched in disbelief as the neighbor's bull swung his ferocious-looking horns. The bull lowered his head, pawed the ground with his front hoof, and charged toward me.

Dumbfounded, my heart pounding, as panic surged through my body, I spun around and raced toward the pasture fence. Collapsing to my knees, I laid down and rolled under the barb-wire fence to get away from the charging bull. I was scared to death, and still remember how fast I ran that day.

The bull snorted and stared at me from behind the fence. I turned, ran across the road, and into our driveway, my legs wobbly with fear. Some of the panic subsided as I spotted my home through the trees.

I walked into the house with tears in my eyes. My voice uncertain and filled with fear, I sobbed as I told my mother about the encounter with the bull. My tears disappeared as my mother sat beside me at the table. It wasn't the milk and cookies, but the love and kindness in my mother's voice that calmed me after my adventure with the bull.

Lesson learned! Do not poke fun at a bull.

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